

# **The New Great Game; A Phase Zero, Regional Engagement Strategy for Central Asia**

**A Monograph**

**by**

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## **Abstract**

The New Great Game; A Phase Zero, Regional Engagement Strategy for Central Asia by COL Michael J. Swanson, US Army, 58 pages.

This monograph focuses on a region of geopolitical and strategic importance to the United States. The region of Central Asia comprises five countries; Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. Historically, this area of the Asian continent was the “mid-point” on the fabled Silk Road trade route between the East and the West. By 21<sup>st</sup> Century standards, the region straddles the Asian continent at its mid-point, between east and west – China and Europe and in particular Russia. Following the terror attacks on September 11, 2001 on the United States, Central Asia took on renewed strategic importance. Finally, proximity to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan necessitated staging bases and support structures to support coalition force combat operations as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Following the collapse and break-up of the Soviet Union, the United States quickly recognized and then established diplomatic relations with the five newly independent Central Asian republics. Initial engagement was bilateral and mainly economic, based on development of energy resources and infrastructure to export energy resources to the west. Five years into the War on Terror, the United States continues to engage with the individual Central Asian nations on a bilateral basis. This methodology of engagement does not take into account the new and shared global realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, nor common interest shared with the major powers that border the region, Russia and China. This monograph proposes a new approach, a Phase 0 (Zero, based on current joint doctrine) regional engagement framework based on the instruments of national power as addressed in the National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism. Also recommended are statutory changes to align resources and the regions of responsibility between U.S. governmental agencies, in particular Department of State and Department of Defense that support the directives contained in National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-44.

Lastly, the monograph addresses the regional institutions that provide a venue for multilateral engagement. Each provides a mechanism to address regional concerns and those concerns that have potential global ramifications. The globalization of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century presents threats and challenges to United States interests and foreign policy that require new and innovative solutions. This monograph has attempted to address one facet, engagement at a regional level that takes into account the many variable s involved and requires a multilateral and comprehensive interagency approach.

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## INTRODUCTION

### **Strategic Setting: End of the Cold War – 9/11.**

In less than 20 years, from 1991 – 2001, two major events occurred, forcing fundamental changes in the United States of America's strategic view of the world. First, the demise of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War brought a change from a bi-polar structure and power distribution of the world to a multi-polar characterization with the United States as the sole remaining super power. Second and most relevant for today were the terror attacks directed against the United States Homeland on 11 September 2001.

Following the internal collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the United States enjoyed a sense of triumph and optimism with a foreign policy grounded in free trade and the promotion of democracy. Although turmoil in the Balkans during the 1990s and the potential areas for conflict remained in the former Soviet Union, America was able to remain optimistic due to an unparalleled military capacity and a relatively peaceful transition to democracy among the former Warsaw Pact states. Other regions of the world, Latin America and Asia, also enjoyed democratic transitions to representative government and market based economies. Although the Middle East and more specifically the Levant region remained mired in the Palestinian – Israeli conflict, the United States had every right to remain optimistic about the future and the 21st Century.

On September 11, 2001, the fundamental view of the world changed for the United States. The events of 9/11 shattered the sense of optimism for the 21st Century bringing death and devastation to the United States and symbols of its national power and prestige. The 9/11 attack was an event of surpassing disproportion. America had suffered surprise attacks before – Pearl Harbor was one well-known instance, and the 1950 Chinese attack in Korea another. However, these were attacks by major powers. While by no means as threatening as Japan’s act of war, the 9/11 attack was in some ways more devastating. A tiny group of people, not enough to man a platoon, carried out the attack. Measured on a governmental scale, the resources behind it were trivial. The group itself was dispatched by an organization based in one of the poorest, most remote, and least industrialized countries on earth. This organization recruited a mixture of young fanatics and highly educated zealots who could not find suitable places in their own societies, or were driven from them.<sup>1</sup>

With the 9/11 attacks the strategic setting for the United States changed fundamentally. The administration of President George W. Bush and the United States government declared a Global War on Terrorism. The past five plus years have seen military engagements around the world, with two main centers of on-going conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq. The enemy has proven to be an elusive, non-state actor, namely a radical Islamic Jihadist movement with global reach and 21st century capabilities.

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<sup>1</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, Final Report of the National Commission of Terrorist Attacks upon the United States. Authorized Edition, W.W. Norton & Company, New York. 339-340.



Today, America is at war with a transnational terrorist movement filled by a radical ideology of hatred, oppression and murder. The United State's strategy involves destroying the larger Al-Qaeda network and confronting the ideology that inspires others to join or support the terrorist movement.<sup>2</sup>

Key to the success in this ongoing Global War on Terror and more importantly, defining and executing a viable strategy for this current conflict and the remainder of the 21st Century is a strategy of engagement using all the instruments of national power. This paper will address a specific region, Central Asia and propose a strategy of engagement using all instruments of national power. The goal is to delineate a policy for United States, as well as statutory and organizational changes to support a regional phase zero engagement strategy in accordance with current joint doctrine. The end state of this strategy is to support the overall Global War on Terror by promoting regional stability and free trade, continues the move towards democratic reform within the governments and societies of the republics of Central Asia.

## **CHAPTER I - Central Asia Defined**

The strategic importance of the five states that comprise the Central Asian Region, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, has been widely recognized since the attacks of September 11, 2001. The subsequent United States led

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<sup>2</sup> United States Government, the White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. Washington DC, March 2006.

campaign to remove the Taliban regime in Afghanistan placed the region on the front line in the global struggle against terror. The states of this region border Russia, China, the Middle East and South Asia. The major peoples of all but Tajikistan speak Turkic languages, the Tajiks speak an Iranian language; and most are Sunni Muslims but some Tajiks are Shiia Muslims. Most are closely related historically and culturally. Basic Central Asian geographic and demographic facts. Area: 1.6 million sq. mi. - larger than India. Kazakhstan: 1.1 million sq. mi.; Kyrgyzstan: 77,000 sq. mi.; Tajikistan: 55,800 sq. mi.; Turkmenistan: 190,000 sq. mi.; Uzbekistan: 174,500 sq. mi. Population: 56.9 million (2004 est., Commonwealth of Independent States Statistic Committee), somewhat less than France; Kazakhstan: 15.1 mil.; Kyrgyzstan: 5.1 mil.; Tajikistan: 6.8 mil.; Turkmenistan: 4.8 mil.; Uzbekistan: 25.1 mil. Gross Domestic Product: \$76.1 billion in 2004; per capita GDP is about \$1,337; poverty is rampant. Kazakhstan: \$40.7 bil; Kyrgyzstan: \$2.2 bil; Tajikistan: \$2.1 bil; Turkmenistan: \$19.2 bil; Uzbekistan: \$11.9 bil. (CIS and national statistics, current prices: Turkmenistan's reported GDP is considered by many observers to be inflated).<sup>3</sup> For additional detail, see Appendix 2.

### **Historical Significance.**

The historical significance of the central Asian region dates back to the time of Alexander the Great. His quest for empire and conquests was but one of many people and empires who moved through the region, either on journeys of conquest, trade or

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<sup>3</sup> Jim Nichol, *Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for US Interests*, CRS Issue Brief for Congress, Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, Washington D.C., DEC

exploration. Marco Polo's journey along the fabled Silk Road in the early 13th century documented in *Il Milione* the importance of the region as the land bridge between west and east for the trade in raw materials and manufactured goods. The Silk Road was the primary west-east trade route until the great oceanic explorations by western European empires in the 14th and 15th centuries moved trade from land based to ocean based routes.

In the 17th century, the powers of Europe were on the drive for empire. Blocked by continental powers, Tsarist Russia looked to the south and east to the Caucasus and Central Asia. From a geopolitical perspective, Russia's advance into Central Asia was a logical extension of the Anglo-Russian Theater of competition from the Turkish straits, to the Caucasus, to the northern fringes of Persia and Afghanistan. The rivalry with England served more as a stimulant than a deterrent to Russian expansion, impelling Russia to move preemptively in Central Asia. Russia's conquest of Central Asia unfolded in three stages, reflecting the political geography of the region. During a 105-year span from 1735, when it pushed its southern frontier to Orenburg at the northern edge of the Kazakh steppe, to approximately 1840, the Russian empire busied itself with settlement and consolidation of its borderlands in the southeast Volga region and Western Siberia. From 1840 to 1864, Russian forces enveloped the Kazakh steppe. The next step was the subjugation of the three Central Asian Khanates (Bukhara, Kokand, and Khiva) which concluded with the fall of Khivain 1873. The defeat of Teke Turkomans in the

1880s constituted the final phase of conquest and brought Russian domination to the modern borders of Iran and Afghanistan. Russia's absorption of Central Asia was of tremendous importance to the empire, both politically and economically, and afforded Russia complete domination of the Caspian Sea and its markets, granting it new, valuable advantage in its affairs with Britain.<sup>4</sup> Relatively ignorant and indifferent to the peoples, cultures and histories indigenous to the region, the Russian Empire made it a single administrative unit and designated it Turkistan.

Within a generation, the Bolshevik revolution overran Russia, which led to the emergence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Not surprisingly, this caused fundamental changes in the manner in which Central Asia was administered. Less than five years after the 1917 revolution it was necessary to dispatch Red Army brigades into the Ferghana Valley (currently shared by Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) and the surrounding areas to quell an uprising known as the Basmachi movement.

By 1924, the Soviet leaders were aggressively beginning to redraw their new empire according to more strategic objectives. Stalin pushed especially hard for Central Asia. Turkistan was divided into the present five republics with borders decided arbitrarily and artificially. A perfect example of the divide and conquer rule, Stalin decided it would be advantageous to draw borders in such a manner so that there would be large segments of non-titular nationalities inside each new republic. Thus, Kyrgyzstan

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<sup>4</sup> Robert F. Baumann, *Russian – Soviet Unconventional Wars in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Afghanistan*. Leavenworth Papers Number 20. Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and Staff

enveloped a large segment of ethnic Uzbeks, Uzbekistan found itself to home to a significant population of Tajiks, and Tajikistan took in thousands of Kyrgyz. On top of this, Stalin also drew boundaries away from natural lines created by rivers and mountain ranges and made sure there was no ethnic or linguistic consistency across geographical areas. Not surprisingly, the significance of these long-ago strategic decisions on present day political issues is incredible.<sup>5</sup> The results of which are today apparent in the division of natural resources such as oil , gas, and water as well as arable land within the Ferghana Valley.

For the next seven decades, Central Asia was cut off from contact with the outside world, as the Soviet Union closed its borders with Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, and later China. Until perestroika in the 1980s began to open some of the closed channels, Central Asians learned nothing about the political ideas that shaped the 20th century, including developments in Islamic thinking and political movements that were going on just across the border. When independence finally came, in 1991, the Central Asians ideologically speaking were still back in the 1920s. The crisis in Central Asia today is directly related to this stunted political and ideological growth, which the Communists ensured by their actions in 1924 and afterwards.<sup>6</sup>

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College, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. 49-115.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew Crosston, *Fostering Fundamentalism: Terrorism, Democracy and American Engagement in Central Asia*. Ashgate Publishing Company, Burlington, VT 2006. 39-41

<sup>6</sup> Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad, the Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, Yale University Press, New Haven USA, and London England, 2002. 35

## **U.S. Geopolitical Significance.**

Appearances are deceptive in Central Asia, this is a region with importance to every major Eurasian power as well as the United States. The one remarkable and unique feature of Central Asia is that it is the strategic backyard of each major Eurasian power as well: Russia, China, and even India; each of these major powers has the bulk of its interests concentrated elsewhere. The United States too, has far more at stake around the periphery of Eurasia than in its heartland. Yet, by virtue of its position in the middle of the world's largest and most important continent and its close links with Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey, Central Asia is nobody's strategic backwater.<sup>7</sup>

In general terms, official United States foreign policy on the Central Asian region has always focused on three areas; preventing the spread of terrorism and radical Islamic groups, helping to provide the tools for good governance with a goal of political and economic reform as well as instituting the rule of law, and ensuring the development of energy reserves.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, U.S. policy focused on nuclear security – primarily on orchestrating the transfer of nuclear weapons from Kazakhstan to Russia and securing nuclear material remaining on Kazakh territory. Once the pressing issue of securing nuclear weapons and materials was addressed, America's broader geo-strategic security concerns in the region became less clear and policy drifted towards a

focus on energy interests and consequently towards the Caspian states. In the mid-1990s, intense U.S. efforts went into support for energy interests in Kazakhstan's oil and gas sector. The United States had clear disagreements with Russia over preferred pipelines which fueled innumerable reports about a new great game. Tensions heightened, but the "great game" for the region's oil did not lead to conflict or cause a serious decline in U.S. - Russian relations. Ultimately, economic viability issues led to a compromise on two pipelines.

As the 1990s progressed, the United States began to take more action in support of its security goals in the region. The rise of the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), a militant and extremist "Islamic" organization, imparted a new urgency to the challenge of terrorism between 1998 and 2001. Countering terrorism, preventing Islamist extremism, enhancing border controls, and fighting narcotics trafficking increasingly became elements of U.S. policy and assistance programs.

The September 11 attacks transformed U.S. policy into an all-consuming war on terror that drove Washington's greatly expanded involvement in Central Asia. The most striking and visible prong of the new approach was the stationing of U.S. military forces in the region. Shortly after September 11, the U.S. government initiated talks with all five Central Asian states to enlist cooperation in the war on terror, and specifically the

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<sup>7</sup> Eugene Rumer, The U.S. Interests and the Role in Central Asia after K2, *The Washington Quarterly*, 29:3, *The Washington Quarterly* Summer 2006. 142

mission in Afghanistan. The result was the establishment of a U.S. military presence with air bases in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, sending U.S. military advisors to Georgia, and the acquisition of over-flight and refueling rights in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan.<sup>8</sup>

Although shaped by geo-political events over the last 15 years, U.S. involvement with the Central Asian states continues to evolve. When taken into the context of one of the stated goals of Al Qaeda, and its associated movements to reinstate a pan-Islamic Caliphate on all historic Muslim lands, Central Asia by virtue of its location is strategic to the United States. The Central Asian states are the central fulcrum point in zone of current and potential conflict stretching from Andalusia in Spain, across North Africa, through the Middle East, Southeast Asia and the southern islands of the Philippines.

## **CHAPTER II - Regional Threats.**

Since independence in 1991, the states of Central Asia have contended with a variety of internal and external challenges to their security and development. Initially gaining a focus from the west as newly independent former Soviet states, each received varying degrees of attention and aid through bilateral relationships and from international organizations. The United States encouraged the Central Asian states to become responsible members of the international community, and supported their participation in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), NATO bodies, as well

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<sup>8</sup> Kathleen A. Collins and William C. Wohlforth, *Central Asia: Defying 'Great Game' Expectations*. Strategic Asia 2004-04: Fragility and Crisis, The National Bureau of Asian Research, Henry



as the World Trade Organization and International Monetary Fund. It is safe to say that prior to the events of 9/11 the results of engagement with the west were inconclusive. Following the terror attacks of September 11 and the subsequent Global War on Terror the threats to the nations in the region remain, but have been more clearly defined as militant Islamic extremist and their organization, proliferation of WMD and the residual Soviet technologies and facilities, organized crime and narcotics trafficking, and the issues with governance and economic security.

### **Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destructions (WMD) and Associated Soviet Era Technology.**

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and growing concerns for security of the former regime's WMD arsenal in the emerging successor states, anti-proliferation and security of WMD and associated technologies have become an on-going priority for U.S. foreign policy. About 1992, Al Qaeda established a WMD acquisition unit manned by hard scientists, technicians, and engineers to target the former Soviet Union's WMD arsenal. Building on contacts made by Afghan mujahideen during the Soviet-Afghan war with renegade Red Army GRU, and KGB officials involved in narcotics trafficking, gem smuggling, and other illicit activities, Al Qaeda quietly began shopping in the former Soviet Union. Because bin Laden attached top priority to these endeavors, and because other entities were spreading the Prophet's message and wielding his sword in the region, he intended to limit Al Qaeda's Central Asian operations to keep a low profile, thereby

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M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, 2004. 295-297.

avoiding the notoriety that might accelerate the then-and-now lethargic pace of U.S. – Russian efforts to secure the former Soviet Union’s WMD arsenal.<sup>9</sup> In June 2001 the United States and Uzbekistan signed a Cooperative Threat Reduction Agreement, establishing a framework to prevent proliferation of WMD – similar to one signed with Kazakhstan in 1993 – included a commitment to the dismantling of former Soviet military chemical, and biological weapons facilities remaining on Uzbek territory.<sup>10</sup>

### **Militant Islamic Extremist and their Organizations.**

Central Asia, a historic center of classical Islam, is located today in a region of historic importance. Yet, only in recent times have radical Islamists entered the region, as it was closed off to the rest of the Islamic world during Soviet rule.

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). After the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Central Asia and Afghanistan’s fates became closely tied together. Central Asian Muslims drew inspiration from the mujahideen guerrilla fighters, and the creation of international Muslim brigades to fight the occupying Soviet forces, set the tone and provided the manpower for Islamist insurgents elsewhere in the region after the 1989 Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. From 1992 to 1997, during the Tajikistan civil war, opposition forces found safe haven and staging ground across the border in Afghanistan.

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<sup>9</sup> Michael Scheuer, *Central Asia in Al-Qaeda’s Vision on the Anti-American Jihad, 1979-2006*, China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly, Volume 4, No.2. Central Asia Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program. Johns Hopkins University, Washington DC & Uppsala University, Sweden, 2006. 6-7.

At the end of the civil war, those who refused to participate in the new, united Tajik government stayed in Afghanistan and joined the Tajik dominated Northern Alliance. Others joined forces with the IMU, which was founded by two ethnic Uzbeks from the Ferghana Valley with the goal of overthrowing the government of Uzbekistan and establishing an Islamic State.

Using Tajikistan as its base, the IMU carried out kidnappings, assassinations, and other atrocities, including a series of armed raids deep into Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan that also targeted foreign visitors and tourists. Eventually, it relocated its base of operations to Afghanistan, extended its mandate to overthrowing all regional governments, and threw in its lot with the Taliban. On the eve of September 11, 2001, Central Asia seemed on the verge of becoming an extension of the turmoil in Afghanistan, with potentially dangerous consequences.<sup>11</sup>

The United States invasion of Afghanistan and overthrow of the Taliban regime severely has curtailed IMU activities in Central Asia. The IMU's military commander was killed in action with the Taliban near Maza-e-Sharif in Afghanistan in November 2001. The political leader long with surviving IMU fighters fled to South Waziristan, a region divided by the Pakistan – Afghanistan border, along with other Jihadist who

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<sup>10</sup> Kathleen A. Collins and William Wohlforth, *Central Asia: Defying 'Great Game' Expectations*. Strategic Asia 2004-04: Fragility and Crisis, The National Bureau of Asian Research, Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, 2004. 297.

<sup>11</sup> Fiona Hill, *Central Asia and the Caucasus: The Impact of the War on Terror*. The Brookings Institute, Washington DC. 2004. 40-41.

escaped at Tora Bora from U.S. and coalition forces. On orders from bin Laden, IMU militants have taken control of South Waziristan.<sup>12</sup>

Hizb ut-Tahir al Islamiyya (HT, The Islamic Party of Liberation). HT grew out of various movements in the Middle East in the 1950s and is considered to have been formally founded in Jordanian controlled East Jerusalem.<sup>13</sup> Hizb ut-Tahir is a supranational Islamic organization. Today it is active in over 40 countries, with its ideological “nerve center” in London, and official headquarters in Jordan.<sup>14</sup> The Central Asian section of HT formed in 1996 and is centered in the Ferghana Valley (mostly Uzbek, but also Tajik and Kyrgyz parts).<sup>15</sup> HT has called for the reestablishment of an Islamic caliphate that would unite all Muslims regardless of national, regional, tribal or clan differences. Its propaganda is vehement in its denunciation of the West and the rejection of Arab regimes not properly honoring the Islamic heritage. It claims to support only non-violent methods but is not against revolutionary struggles conducted by other groups that already exist and do not involve violence. In many ways, HT mimics the “non-involvement” of Osama bin Laden, who personally does not take part in violent

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<sup>12</sup> Zeyno Baran, *Radical Islamist in Central Asia. Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, vol. 2. Center on Islam, Democracy, and the Future of the Muslim World, Hudson Institute, Washington, DC., 2005. 6.

<sup>13</sup> Matthew Crosston, *Fostering Fundamentalism: Terrorism, Democracy and American Engagement in Central Asia*. Ashgate Publishing Company, Burlington, VT 2006. 147.

<sup>14</sup> Zeyno Baran, *Radical Islamist in Central Asia. Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, vol. 2. Center on Islam, Democracy, and the Future of the Muslim World, Hudson Institute, Washington, DC., 2005. 3.

operations but clearly adheres to and espouses an ideology and belief system that implicitly accepts, applauds, and aids them. Thus, HT's so-called pacifism needs to be understood as a false idol: its non-violence pledge is most certainly countered by the tacit support it gives to others' violence.<sup>16</sup> Hizb ut-Tahir is engaged in a nonviolent jihad consisting of three stages: clandestine indoctrination, open public campaign, and taking over power.<sup>17</sup>

HT has the best chance for success in Central Asia, which is its main battleground. Many Central Asian governments continue evolving and searching for legitimacy, and the struggle to provide socio-economic improvements, which would evaporate support for possible coup attempts. While HT is still most active in the Ferghana valley and other areas of ethnic Uzbek concentration, the group has spread its presence to all five Central Asian republics.

Although located on the eastern periphery of the Central Asia, China's western Province of Xingjian may potentially affect the region as another venue for ethnic strife and Islamic extremist activities. Xingjian's large Muslim and Turkic population has viewed itself as religiously and ethnically distinct from Han Chinese society. Increasingly, they have come to adopt a consolidated identity as Uyghurs. The Uyghurs

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<sup>15</sup> Elizabeth Van Wie Davis and Rouben Azizian, *Islam, Oil, and Geopolitics: Central Asia after September 11*. Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, INC, Mayrland, 2007. 81.

<sup>16</sup> Matthew Crosston, *Fostering Fundamentalism: Terrorism, Democracy and American Engagement in Central Asia*. Ashgate Publishing Company, Burlington, VT 2006. 148.

comprise just under half of Xingjian's population, but with the addition of Kazakhs and Kyrgyz the number of Turkic Muslims rises to over half the total. The Uyghurs have not, until the past few generations, shared a strong sense of common destiny, focusing their identity instead on the separated, irrigated oases or, in the case of Kazakhs, open steppe lands, on which their economic existence depended. Beijing's policies have encouraged this development at least since 1957, when Mao named the entire province the "Xingjian Autonomous Uyghur Region". However, the Uyghurs to whom Mao granted this autonomous status now feel that Beijing's progress is placing their very existence as a people under threat.

During the twentieth century, the Soviet Union offered refuge to Uyghurs who fled Chinese rule. This accounts for the 500,000 members of the Uyghur diaspora in Central Asia. Today, Russia and the Central Asian states are less sympathetic and more concerned that the Uyghur exiles in their midst are becoming increasingly Islamicized and radicalized by outside forces. Their high rate of unemployment and extreme alienation make young Uyghur men receptive to recruitment by Islamic groups. China fears that separatist and Islamic fundamentalist political movements will move east from Central Asia into Xingjian, creating unrest, and or that Central Asian states will provide sanctuary for Uyghur revolutionaries or help supply them with arms. The extent to which this is already taking place is unclear, but there are apparent links with Al Qaeda and reports of Uyghur Chinese citizens fighting in Chechnya and Afghanistan. Both

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<sup>17</sup> Elizabeth Van Wie Davis and Rouben Azizian, *Islam, Oil, and Geopolitics: Central Asia after*

Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan worry somewhat about China's large and powerful presence on their borders and the substantial Kazakh and Kyrgyz populations in China.<sup>18</sup>

Ample reserves of oil and gas invite investment. The steady opening of China's western border to trade after 1985 has created unheard of opportunities for Chinese citizens. Millions of Han Chinese, seeking to improve their lives have flooded into Xingjian Province. China has repeated its commitment to investment and economic development in Xingjian; to the construction of roads, railroads and other infrastructure there, to the development of the Xingjian's oil and gas reserves, to promoting the national program of education, to the free movement of labor into the province, to the principle of advancement based on ability and to selective affirmative action to benefit minorities.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, the Al Qaeda terror nexus. Since September 11, Al Qaeda is no longer the same organization it once was – a tight knit band of extremists who had sworn bayat, allegiance, to bin Ladin and who were operating at the behest of a small group of hard-core lieutenants directing attacks from the remote foothills of Afghanistan. In addition to allying with criminal groups, Al Qaeda since the beginning of the GWOT has reached out to other Islamist groups to form a broad and deep terrorist coalition. This broad alliance provides Al Qaeda with much more operational flexibility, as well as a greater diffused

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*September 11*. Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, INC, Mayrland, 2007. 88.

<sup>18</sup> Gram E. Fuller and Frederick S. Starr, *The Xingjian Problem*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, John Hopkins University, Maryland, 2004. 5-20.

<sup>19</sup> Olga Oliker and Thomas S. Szayna, *Faultlines of Conflict in Central Asia and the South Caucasus; implications for the U.S. Army*, United States Army, RAND, Santa Monica, CA 2003. 213-214

organizational structure.<sup>20</sup> The IMU links to Al Qaeda date back to 1996, when bin Laden relocated to Afghanistan and set up a secure base of operations in areas under Taliban control. The IMU has also been connected to Al Qaeda through groups in bin Laden's wider terror network. The movement has long been accused of working in collaboration with Chechen rebels in Russia and Dagestan, as well as with Uyghur separatists in China's Xingjian province. According to the Uzbeks, the primary purpose of these ties has been to facilitate the export of Islamic radicalism to the outer fringes of Central Asia as well as establish networks that have played an indispensable role in trafficking of Afghan heroine.<sup>21</sup>

### **Organized Crime and Narcotics Trafficking.**

'Central Asia has emerged as an important trafficking route for Southwest Asian narcotics. The UN estimates that 30 percent of Afghan narcotics transit Central Asia on their way to Russia and Europe. Porous borders, scarce resources, and corruption constrain the Central Asian countries' efforts to stem the drug trade. In addition, we continue to see some links between drug trafficking organizations, organized crime and terrorist groups in the region'.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Sean N. Kalic, *Combating a Modern Hydra Al Qaeda and the Global War on Terrorism*. Occasional Paper 8, Combat Studies Institute Press, Ft. Leavenworth Kansas, 2006. 58.

<sup>21</sup> Angel Rabassa, *Beyond al-Qaeda, Part 1, the Global Jihadist Movement*. Rand Project Air Force, Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, California, 2006. 114-115.

<sup>22</sup> James C. MacDougall, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Eurasia. Statement before the House Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia.



Among various forms of organized crime, the trade in illicit drugs arguably carries the largest societal, political and economic consequences. It threatens the fabric of societies through addiction, crime and disease. It exacerbates corruption in already weak states, impairing their economic and political functioning. Moreover, through its linkages to insurgency and terrorism, the drug trade is an increasing threat to regional and international security in a most traditional and military sense.

For several reasons, Central Asia has been one of the regions whose security has been most negatively affected by organized crime. To begin with, the region is geographically positioned between the production and consumption areas of narcotics, Afghanistan and Europe. Secondly, the lack of functioning basic state institutions in the region made it an ideal smuggling route at a time when Turkey and Iran were tightening border controls. Third, the weakness of the state institutions facilitated the growth of corruption as well as the capture of state institutions by private interest groups. Fourth, the lack of consensus over the borders or political systems of several regional states and ensuing armed conflict over both territory and government further weakened the states and helped create violent non-state actors that have a potential gain from involvement in the drug trade.<sup>23</sup>

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<http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/Archives/109mcd042606.pdf>. accessed from the internet, NOV 2006. 7.

<sup>23</sup> Svante E. Cornell, *The Narcotics Threat in Greater Central Asia: From Crime –Terror Nexus to State Infiltration*. China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly, Volume 4, No.4. Central Asia Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program. Johns Hopkins University, Washington DC & Uppsala University, Sweden, 2006. 38.

According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC) 2005 World Drug Report, the cultivation and production of opium in Afghanistan comprised over 85 percent of the world output of this drug, making the country by far the most important producer of drugs in the Eurasian continent. The transportation of Afghan opium and heroin through Central Asian countries significantly increased in the late 1990 and early 2000s. The Central Asian states' drug seizures have gradually increased since the late 1990s, and the region remains the main transit route to Russia and Europe. Among the Central Asian states, Tajikistan seizes the highest amounts of opiates annually, amounting to 2,370 kilograms in 2003. The rest of the states seized considerably smaller amounts in 2003: Turkmenistan – 138, Uzbekistan – 151, Kazakhstan – 192, Kyrgyzstan – 46 kilograms.<sup>24</sup>

U.S. authorities now believe that the income derived from these drug running operations was essential to the development and expansion of terrorist infrastructure that bin Laden setup in northern Afghanistan during the later half of the 1990s. A major element of the crime-terror nexus in Central Asia is the IMU. The IMU is singularly well placed to control the drug trade from Afghanistan to Central Asia: it had well-established links with the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and the former Tajikistan opposition (now in government) which in turn had close links with the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan. The network of contacts built up by the IMU has enabled it to freely move across

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<sup>24</sup> Erica Marat, *The State-Crime Nexus in Central Asia: State Weakness, Organized Crime, and Corruption in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, A Silk Road Paper, OCT 2006. 40-42.

Afghanistan and Tajikistan unlike any other known organization. INTERPOL labeled the IMU “a hybrid organization in which criminal interests often take priority over political goals, adding that “IMU leaders have a vested interest in ongoing unrest and instability in their area in order to secure the routes they use for the transportation of drugs”.<sup>25</sup>

Besides the drug economy, trafficking in human beings is one of the most pressing problems among organized criminal activities in Central Asia. Women, children and labor migrants are common victims of the human trade. Trafficking in human beings is closely connected with trafficking in drugs. The direction of human trafficking and human smuggling leads to Middle Eastern countries, Europe and Russia.<sup>26</sup>

### **Governance, Corruption and Economic Security**

A major reason for U.S. interest in Central Asia concerns the potential for failure of political and economic development in the region. The September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States demonstrated that instability, failed and failing states, and economic and political underdevelopment present security concerns, not just to the states that suffer directly from these problems but also to the global community as a whole. From this perspective, political, social, and economic trends in Central Asia merit attention.

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<sup>25</sup> Svante E. Cornell, *The Narcotics Threat in Greater Central Asia: From Crime –Terror Nexus to State Infiltration*. China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly, Volume 4, No.4. Central Asia Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program. Johns Hopkins University, Washington DC & Uppsala University, Sweden, 2006. 47.

<sup>26</sup> Erica Marat, *The State-Crime Nexus in Central Asia: State Weakness, Organized Crime, and Corruption in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, A Silk Road Paper, OCT 2006. 63.

James C. MacDougall, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Eurasia, underscored the importance of political and economic reform in testimony before Congress on April 26, 2006.

“Political liberalization and economic development in Central Asia are key to the region’s long-term success. Lack of freedom from oppression and poverty breeds instability. Similarly, where government lacks authority throughout its country’s territory, you will find predatory forces, both inside and outside the country, that seek to fill the vacuum, often in destabilizing ways. Economic opportunity and good governance are the long-term solutions to these problems. Terrorist groups will find few recruits within a population that has a vibrant economy and confidence in its governmental institutions. Regarding internal stability, no government has more legitimacy than one that is freely selected by its citizens. Defense reform efforts play a significant role in strengthening one of the basic foundations of democratic society – capable, civilian –controlled, and responsible defense establishments. The economic vitality we seek to create in Central Asia can be promoted through regional cooperation and international investment. The U. S. government seeks to tie Central Asia into a regional web of economic cooperation and stability, with support from international financial and U.S. commercial sectors... Central Asia’s energy sector needs increased investment. We must work to link up the impressive hydrocarbon and hydroelectric energy resources in Central Asia with regional and global energy markets. Further development of these resources and diversification of delivery routes from Central Asia – both economically beneficial to these countries – is a U.S. priority.”<sup>27</sup>

With the advent of the war on terrorism, there was great hope, if not expectation, among regional observers that the new spotlight on the region, combined with improved security and increased foreign policy attention, and technical and financial assistance from the United States, would open up Central Asia. Indeed, in the case of Central Asia,

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<sup>27</sup> James C. MacDougall, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Eurasia. Statement before the House Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia. <http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/Archives/109mcd042606.pdf>. accessed from the internet, NOV 2006

the war on terrorism has empowered governments to continue aggressive campaigns against their opponents and given an added impetus to repression. It has provided further justification for eliminating political dissent and social protests, and for clamping down on unsanctioned forms of religious expression and observance.<sup>28</sup>

Possible scenarios of political development in Central Asia have ranged from continued rule in most states by former Soviet elites to violent transitions to Islamic fundamentalist or xenophobic rule. Relative peaceful transitions to more or less democratic and Western-oriented political systems have been considered less likely by many observers. Some have suggested that such a scenario might be conceivable in Kyrgyzstan, because of the slightly wider scope of civil liberties in that country compared to the rest of Central Asia. All the Central Asian leaders have remained in power by orchestrating extensions of their terms and by eliminating possible contenders. Besides the recent coup in Kyrgyzstan, there have been alleged attempts in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan, and the leaders in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan face rising popular protests.<sup>29</sup>

The growth of criminal influence over state institutions changes the impetus for decision-making and implementation of laws. Institutions gradually cease to perform the functions for which they were instituted, and are instead ‘privatized’, serving the purpose

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<sup>28</sup> Fiona Hill, *Central Asia and the Caucasus: The Impact of the War on Terror*. The Brookings Institute, Washington DC. 2004. 41-42.

<sup>29</sup> 28 Jim Nichol, *Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for US Interests*, CRS Issue Brief for Congress, Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, Washington D.C., DEC 2005. CRS-8.

of the criminal enterprise into which they are co-opted. Although these concrete effects of organized crime on the political security are significant enough, the most debilitating and indeed existential threat it causes may be to undermine both the domestic and international legitimacy of ruling elites. Domestically, the criminalization of a ruling elite poses a danger for its survival in the face of public protests. Internationally, it may cause economic sanctions and other forms of threats, including military action by states threatened by the resulting unrest.<sup>30</sup>

Security and stability are key to ensuring economic development and security. The Bush Administration and others stress that U.S. support for free market reforms directly serve U.S. national interests by opening new markets for U.S. goods and services and sources of energy and minerals. U.S. private investment committed to Central Asia has greatly exceeded that provided by Russia or most other European states except Azerbaijan. U.S. trade agreements have been signed and entered into force with all Central Asian states, but bilateral investment treaties are in force only in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

The emergence of Central Asia as a “new silk road” of trade and commerce is challenged by corruption, inadequate roads, punitive tariffs, border tensions, and the uncertain respect for contracts. All states of the region possess large-scale resources that

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<sup>30</sup> Svante E. Cornell, *The Narcotics Threat in Greater Central Asia: From Crime –Terror Nexus to State Infiltration*, China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly, Volume 4, No.4. Central Asia Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program. Johns Hopkins University, Washington DC & Uppsala University, Sweden, 2006. 42.

could yield export earning, but these challenges scare off major foreign investment, except in the energy sector, to revamp, develop, or market the resources. The Kazakh and Turkmen economies are dependent on energy exports but need added foreign investment for production and transport. Uzbekistan's state-controlled cotton and gold production rank among the highest in the world and is much exported. It also has moderate energy reserves. Kyrgyzstan has major gold mines and strategic mineral reserves, is a major wool producer, and could benefit from tourism. Tajikistan has one of the world's largest aluminum processing plants and is a major cotton grower.<sup>31</sup>

### **CHAPTER III – United States Regional Policy**

Central Asia as a region is an area that is connected in many ways. First, culturally by a shared common Muslim religion among the majority of the ethnic populations, second, by a shared history of domination by the former Soviet Union which also dispersed various ethnic groups that make up the region and scattered ethnic pockets amongst each of the five states and their respective populations, and lastly by a common history as the central portion of the ancient Silk Road. Beyond a common shared history and shared religious and ethnic composition, there is a common shared transportation network as well as a resource and manufacturing trade network, also dating back to the Soviet period. Energy resources and prospective markets make the region attractive, although more from a long-term perspective than in an immediate sense. At the same

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<sup>31</sup> Jim Nichol, *Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for US Interests*, CRS Issue Brief for Congress, Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, Washington D.C., DEC 2006. CRS-13.

time, concerns about the region's stability worry neighbors and others, who are already either affected or stand to be by narcotics trade, weapons trade, organized crime, and other transnational threats that move through, and potentially issue from the region. Finally, many states are concerned about the possible rise of Islamic radical groups in Central Asia, and these groups' potential to influence Muslim and ethnic Turkic populations in their own countries.<sup>32</sup> Each of these reasons necessitate a regional comprehensive and from the United States to deal with this strategic area.

### **U.S. Engagement Prior to and After 9/11**

Prior to September 11, U.S. engagement with the Central Asian states consisted of policies designed to protect against potential long-term security risks rather than the imminent dangers against the United States originating in the region. The one exception was the U.S. engagement in nuclear diplomacy with Kazakhstan, which was a priority for both the George H. W. Bush and Clinton administrations to ensure that all Soviet-era nuclear weapons were removed from the newly independent states. Policies in the oil and gas sector, however, began to take center stage in the relationships of the mid-1990s and were to diversify Western long-term reserves, rather than to cope with near-term energy issues.<sup>33</sup> Policy in Central Asia reflected these ideas. The first priority in the region was the elimination of strategic nuclear weapons and associated infrastructure

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<sup>32</sup> Lal Rollie, *Central Asia and its Asian Neighbors: Security at the Crossroads*, Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, CA. 2006. 1.



from Kazakhstan to reduce the threat of proliferation. This was accomplished through the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program, which since that time has also done significant work in addressing the threat posed by non-nuclear weapons of mass destruction and related infrastructure in the region. The United States also provided economic and democratization assistance throughout the region, tried to bolster U.S. firms willing to invest in Central Asia, and began to build low-level military contact with Central Asia militaries, both bilaterally and through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) Partnership for Peace (PFP) program. However, it stopped far short of security guarantees to any Central Asia states, and its resource expenditures in the region were limited, especially when compared with U.S. spending on other post-Soviet states such as Ukraine.<sup>34</sup>

Shortly after September 11, the U.S. government initiated talks with all five Central Asia states to enlist their cooperation in the war on terror, and specifically in the mission in Afghanistan. The United States certainly gained from being able to identify the right interlocutors in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, a capacity developed through military contacts built in the years proceeding September 11. Yet the United States also gained access to facilities in Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, two countries with which military ties were all but nonexistent before 2001. There may be some correlation

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<sup>33</sup> Martha Brill Olcott, *Central Asia's Second Chance*, The Carnegie Endowment for Peace, The Brookings Press, Washington D.C. 2005. 15-20.

<sup>34</sup> Olga Oliker and David A. Shlapak, *U.S. Interests in Central Asia: Policy Priorities and Military Roles*, Rand Air Force Project, Rand Corporation, Santa Monica California, 2005. 8.

between willingness to grant access and a prior interest in building a relationship, particularly on the part of Uzbekistan, given the Uzbek government's long-held desire for closer and better ties to the United States.<sup>35</sup>

Since the terrorist attacks on the United States, the Bush Administration has stated that U.S. policy toward Central Asia focuses on the promotion of security, domestic reforms, and energy development. According to then-Deputy Assistant Secretary of State B. Lynn Pascoe in testimony in June 2002, the September 11 attacks led the Administration to realize that "it was critical to the national interests of the United States that we greatly enhance our relations with the five Central Asian countries" to prevent them from becoming harbors of terrorism.<sup>36</sup>

## **Current U.S. National Security Policy**

Currently the United States lacks a defined, coherent, multi-lateral and comprehensive, regional strategy that supports regional development and the on-going Global War on Terror. Since 2001, the Global War on Terror has preoccupied the policy makers of the United States Government. Three documents that have been published are; 2 versions (2002 and 2006) of the National Security Strategy, the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism (2006), and the National Military Strategic Plan for Combating Terrorism (2006). In combination, each of these documents lays the foundation for a

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<sup>35</sup> Olga Oliker and David A. Shlapak, *U.S. Interests in Central Asia: Policy Priorities and Military Roles*, Rand Air Force Project, Rand Corporation, Santa Monica California, 2005. 11.

<sup>36</sup> Jim Nichol, *Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for US Interests*, CRS Issue Brief for Congress, Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, Washington D.C., DEC 2005. CRS-2.

comprehensive, regional plan to support both the global war on terror effort and further the democratic development of the Central Asian states. Each of the above stated documents adds to the genesis of a coherent strategy, concentrating first on combating terrorism from a military and governmental perspective, then an over arching national strategy, which supports that stated by Deputy Secretary of State, B. Lynn Pascoe.

The National Security Strategy (NSS), dated March 2006, establishes the essential tasks for the development of a recommended multilateral, regional policy required for the Central Asian states in Chapter IV of this monograph. Specifically the essential tasks the United States must execute: Champion aspirations for human dignity; Strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism and work to prevent attacks against us and our friends; Work with others to defuse regional conflicts; Prevent our enemies from threatening us, our allies, and our friends with weapons of mass destruction (WMD); Ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade; Expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy; Develop agendas for cooperative action with other main centers of global power; Transform America's national security institutions to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century; and Engage the opportunities and confront the challenges of globalizations.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> United States Government. National Security Strategy of the United States of America. Washington DC, March 2006.

The National strategy for Combating Terrorism (NSCT) dated September 2006 further complements the essential tasks of the NSS and supporting a regional engagement plan for Central Asia. The NSCT's strategy for winning the war on terror consists of both a long-term approach: Advancing effective democracy, and four short-term priorities of action: Prevent attacks by terrorist networks; Deny WMD to rogue states and terrorist allies who seek to use them; Deny terrorist the support and sanctuary of rogue states; Deny terrorists control of any nation they would use as a base and launching pad for terror.<sup>38</sup>

Finally, the National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism (NMSP-WOT), dated February 2006, describes the means for executing the United States national strategy for winning the war on terror, which is complementary to the NSCT and NSS. The NMSP –WOT provides this monograph's framework using DIMEFIL as the instruments of national power for proposing a comprehensive, multilateral engagement plan that addresses regional issues posed in the prior chapters. Specifically stated, success in this war will rely heavily on the close cooperation among U.S. Government agencies and partner nations to integrate all instruments of U.S. and partner national power – diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement (DIMEFIL).<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> United States Government *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*. Washington DC. September 2006.

<sup>39</sup> United States Government. *National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism*. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Washington DC, February 2006.

The terrorist attacks on the United States of September 11, 2001 demonstrated what can happen when the international community turns its back on a region - in this case Afghanistan and its neighbors – and its problems. Yet despite all the money subsequently devoted to the war on terror and to preventing a repeat of the circumstances that allowed Al Qaeda to thrive, the prospect of new failed states developing in Central Asia is greater today than it was then. Western interest in Central Asia has been quick to wane, partly because problems have cropped up in other parts of the world. The United States became preoccupied with the war in Iraq and in general the international donor community became quickly disappointed by the initial results of their efforts at reengagement.<sup>40</sup> Geopolitics and the strategic importance of the Central Asian states, including direct support to ongoing operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, and the region's central location within the potential arc of conflict in greater Islamic world, necessitate a comprehensive multilateral regional approach and must be adopted. This regional approach for multilateral engagement, must addresses regional issues early (Phase 0, addressed in the next chapter), and must coordinate U.S. national policy, before crisis or conflict erupts, thus forestalling a scenario of one or more failing states and regional conflict.

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<sup>40</sup>Martha Brill Olcott, *Central Asia's Second Chance*, The Carnegie Endowment for Peace, The Brookings Press, Washington D.C. 2005. 1-2.

## **CHAPTER IV – Phase 0 (ZERO) – A Regional Engagement Plan**

As previously stated, Central Asia holds significant geopolitical interests for the United States, the region's stability and continued development supports a successful outcome in the ongoing Global War on Terror. The current approach of bilateral engagement in the region lacks consistency, unity of effort and is not efficient at the interagency level. This chapter proposes a framework; which addresses statutory changes required by the United States Congress to support organizational changes in the agencies of the Federal government, realignment of the Department of State's areas of interest in order to parallel those of the Department of Defense's Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCC) areas of responsibility, and a necessary chain of responsibility as well as funding to support a regional Phase 0 engagement plan for the Central Asian republics. This proposed plan will support current U.S. national security policies and will facilitate unity of effort and a coordinated interagency approach to regional engagement in Central Asia.

Our nation's confusion about our role in the world is magnified by our failure to organize ourselves appropriately to achieve our goals there. There is a disconnect between the foxhole and government systems. Part of the disconnect stems from the obsolete way our government is set up to respond to world events. The Federal government, its agencies and departments are stove-piped on functional lines. Each of

them – Defense, State, Intelligence, Justice, etc – does its own thing.<sup>41</sup> Although the 9/11 Commission recommended greater integration and information sharing, this recommendation was primarily in the intelligence and law enforcement communities. We still lack complete integration between the Department of Defense, specifically at the Geographical Combatant Commander (GCC) level and the other Federal Departments and Agencies.

### **A New Organization for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Engagement**

Since the release of the 9/11 Commission Report following the attacks of 11 September 2001, the United States Government began a revolutionary reorganization effort. Initially, this effort focused on the recommendations for intelligence gathering and increased security against additional attacks. The following proposal addresses the organizations and personnel from Department of State (DOS) and Department of Defense (DOD) that are responsible for formulating and executing national engagement policies that support the execution of the national strategy for the war on terror.

At present, the Department of Defense is organized into six geographic combatant commands while the Department of State is divided into six geographical areas.<sup>42</sup> The five Central Asian countries addressed in this monograph are in the U.S. Central

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<sup>41</sup> Tony Zinni and Tony Klotz, *The Battle for Peace, a Frontline Vision of America's Power and Purpose*, Pelgrave Macmillan, New York, 2006. 130-135.

<sup>42</sup> State Department Website, [www.State.gov/countries](http://www.State.gov/countries), accessed 15 DEC 06 and U.S. Central Command Website, [www.centcom.mil](http://www.centcom.mil), accesses 15 DEC 06.

Command's (USCENTCOM) area of responsibility (AOR), while they fall within the Department of State's South and Central Asia Bureau. The South and Central Asia Bureau split its region between both US Central Command and US Pacific Command. This arrangement leads to potential overlap and seams between the two Department of Defense Combatant Commanders and their staffs in working geopolitical issues with State Department representatives. This situation lends itself, in a worst case, to a lack of focus, coordination, synchronization and more importantly a lack in an overall unity of effort to pursue regional goals and US policy objectives. The current overlap and underlap between DOD and DOS areas of responsibility must be addressed by statutory changes within the executive branch of the U.S. government. A recommendation is to align the areas as within DOD and DOS and rename as National Interest and Security Regions, where the National Security Council (NSC) would act as the lead agency for the executive branch and assisting coordination between DOD and DOS.

Currently the GCC and combatant command staff must work with the Department of State through individual country ambassadors and through the respective country teams. This leads to a potential diffusing of effort within a given region, as well as a lack of continuity and unity of effort across geopolitical boundaries. Each of the respective area of responsibility for the Department of Defense or Bureaus for the Department of state can be defined by regions. Regions are generally defined by geography, but in this current age of global communication and rapid transportation, ethnicity, religion and political affiliation can and do define regions. The alignment of AORs and Bureaus as well as the designation of regions within each is a function for the Executive Branch through the National Security Council (NSC) involving representatives of both the



departments of Defense and State to include staff members from the affected GCCs. To facilitate regional engagement planning and interagency integration, the appointment of regional ambassadors working directly with the GCCs is a necessary step. This action would allow the GCC and his staff to work through one regional level ambassador as opposed to the present situation of dealing with each individual ambassador for countries that we have diplomatic relations within his AOR. This arrangement allows the GCC's, theater security cooperation working group to coordinate with one ambassador, in order to address regional issues and synchronize regional engagement plans with the other of the interagency players.

The next issue to address for 21<sup>st</sup> century reorganization is the interagency regional/country teams located at the GCC headquarters. Interagency regional/country teams must be organized to reflect the departments of the Federal government responsible for executing national policy across the spectrum of the instruments of national power. A representative country team working group stationed at a GCC headquarters would have the following representative composition by Federal department; Department of State to include representation from U.S. Agency for International Development, Department of Defense (OIC for Theater Security Cooperation), Department of Justice (FBI), Department of Treasury, Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, and Department of Homeland Security. This team, with proper training and background is capable of meeting national security policy based on the instruments of national power. In order for complete synergy, similar teams located at the respective individual country embassy should mirror Regional/Country Teams at the GCC level.

Finally, funding for this ambitious program remains the primary issue for establishing an engagement strategy and organization to support, at the country and GCC level that will support engagement efforts required in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This initiative requires support and funding from the United States Congress. The most recent call for and potential venue to provide the personnel recruitment, support and funding for this venture is bipartisan support to President Bush's call for a Civilian Reserve Corps in his 2007 State of the Union Speech.<sup>43</sup> A bipartisan effort to fund and promote this program will ensure the United States is able to recruit competitively amongst the best and brightest our country has to offer. Incentive programs for recruitment and retention of qualified personnel must be part of the national debate and strategy for prosecuting the Global War on Terror (GWOT). The mechanism for resourcing must be addressed in another forum and is beyond the subject and scope of this monograph.

This proposed reorganization framework for regional engagement supports the intent and spirit of NSPD-44, 'The Secretaries of State and Defense will integrate stabilization and reconstruction contingency plans with military contingency plan when relevant and appropriate. The Secretaries of State and Defense will develop a general framework for fully coordinating stabilization and reconstruction activities and military operations at all levels where appropriate'.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> White House Website, [www.whitehouse.gov/state of the union/2007/index.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/state%20of%20the%20union/2007/index.html), accessed 15 APR 07.

<sup>44</sup> United States Government. White House, *National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-44*, Washington, 7 December 2005.

## Joint Doctrine for Shaping the Environment – Phase 0

The importance of a comprehensive Phase 0 theater/regional engagement plan, from the perspective of the GCC (in the case of Central Asia, the CENTCOM commander) is the ability to coordinate and synchronize interagency actions while minimizing past instances of miscommunication with the Central Asian states.<sup>45</sup> Miscommunication is the failure to communicate clearly. Early US – Central Asian security cooperative efforts were marked by miscommunication. Miscommunication occurred between US officials and their Central Asian counterparts between Central Asian agencies within the same country and between US agencies working security cooperation programs. Some of the early miscommunications were of the type that could reasonably be expected when countries, organizations and individuals unfamiliar with each other meet for the first time. From the US side, miscommunication with the Central Asians was often due to an over eagerness to make a good impression and to be supportive of the Central Asians. On many occasions, it was a matter of not properly managing Central Asian expectations. In other instances, the miscommunication resulted as a lack of understanding, poor staff work or worse. A comprehensive Phase 0 plan facilitates a national unity of effort and further supports the overall AOR Theater Security Cooperation Plan (TSCP). The phasing model for GCC actions in an AOR is addressed in the signature draft of Department of Defense Joint Doctrine; Joint Publication, JP-5-0

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<sup>45</sup> William C. Lambert, *US-Central Asian Security Cooperation: Misunderstandings, Miscommunications & Missed Opportunities*, Security Assistance, U.S. and International Historical

– Joint Operation Planning, Chapter IV, Operational Art and Design, 7.f (1) Shape. Joint and multinational operations – inclusive of normal and routine military activities – and various interagency activities are performed to dissuade or deter potential adversaries and to assure or solidify relationships with friends and allies. They are executed continuously with the intent to enhance international legitimacy and gain multinational cooperation in support of defined military and national strategic objectives. They are designed to assure success by shaping perceptions and influencing the behavior of both adversaries and allies, developing allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and coalition operations, improving information exchange and intelligence sharing, and providing US forces with peacetime and contingency access.

### **Phase 0 Regional Engagement Plan - Instruments of National Power**

The key elements of the U.S. government GWOT strategy are, protect and defend the homeland, attack terrorists and their capacity to operate effectively at home and abroad, and support mainstream Muslim efforts to reject violent extremism. The three crosscutting enablers are expanding foreign partnership capacity, strengthening capacity to prevent terrorist acquisition and use of WMD, and institutionalizing domestically and internationally the strategy against violent extremist. The means for carrying out this strategy is addressed in the National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism – Means. Success in this war will depend heavily on the close cooperation among U.S.

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Perspectives, The Proceedings of the Combat Studies Institute 2006 Military History Symposium, Combat Studies Institute Press, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, 2006. 141-148.

Government agencies and partner nations to integrate all instruments of U.S. and partner national power - - diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement (DIMEFIL). The clandestine nature of terrorist organizations, their support by some populations and governments, and the trend toward decentralized control and integration of diverse communities worldwide complicate the employment of military power.<sup>46</sup>

The phase 0 regional engagement plan's framework is the instruments of national power – D-I-M-E-F-I-L. The key is interagency participation, led by the GCC Theater Security Cooperation planning staff, and supported by the Department of State's Regional Ambassador and respective country teams at the embassy level. This framework supports National Policy and is a simple manner to organize and to discuss the functional areas of the engagement process at the national level.

Diplomatic. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the United States recognized the independence and established diplomatic relations with all of the former Central Asian republics. Increased congressional interest led to passage of the "Silk Road Act of 1999" specifically authorizing enhanced U.S. policy attention and aid to the region. In 2006, an update to the Silk Road Strategy Act of 1999 was submitted to modify targeting of assistance in order to support the economic and political independence of the countries of Central Asia and the South Caucasus in recognition of

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<sup>46</sup> United States Government, *National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism*. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Washington DC, February 2006. 6.

political and economic changes in these regions since enactment of the original legislation. Three key recommendations to support the objectives of the 2006 update propose the establishment of one or more of the following: One, a Silk Road Advisory Board, which would include experts with the necessary contacts and expertise in the region in sectors such as sustainable agricultural development, oil and gas extraction, energy transportation infrastructure planning and construction, democratic development, banking, finance, and legal reform; Two, a specialized private sector energy consultancy, tasked with coordinating business community projects and promoting investment opportunities in trade as well as infrastructure for the production, transportation, and refining of energy and petrochemicals. And three, an annual conference of the sponsors and beneficiaries of assistance provided pursuant to this Act to be held in conjunction with the annual United Nations Economic Council of Europe (UNECE) Energy Security Forum, which seeks to promote the security of energy supplies for all members of the Economic Council of Europe through well-balanced networks of energy transportation infrastructure, improvements in sustainable energy technology and efficiency, and through the integration of legal standards for transparent energy extraction, transportation, and pricing. Unfortunately, this legislation was not passed before the congressional session ended.<sup>47</sup> Current and proposed legislation have established good policies and recommendation for engagement in the region. One issue that must be addressed is U.S. engagement evolving from a bilateral to a multilateral approach and

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<sup>47</sup> GovTrack.us. S. 2749-109th Congress (2006): Silk Road Strategy Act of 2006, <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=s109-2749>> (accessed APR 1, 2007).

engaging with current existing multilateral organizations (which will be addressed in chapter V of this monograph). The proposed reorganization, with a regional ambassador working directly with the GCC staff and country teams will ensure regional synchronization and unit of effort of the interagency members in furthering U.S. National strategy for Central Asia.

Information. Favorable perceptions of the United States were on the decline in the Muslim world prior to the attacks of September 11. Operations Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Iraqi Freedom in Iraq have not helped change those perceptions. Former Assistant Secretary for Defense for International Security Affairs, Joseph Nye, describes an alternate source of power: soft power. He explains that soft power uses attraction to get desired outcomes without tangible threats or payoffs. To make soft power work effectively, U.S. must carefully select the methods that will attract others to its interests. Public diplomacy is one form of soft power employed successfully in the past by the United States. The nation used it during the cold war through the United States Information Agency (USIA), but it was disestablished in 1999, to communicate American values to the populations of Communist countries and to neutral countries and allied populations as well. To address persistent public diplomacy shortfalls, the U.S. Government should resurrect within the Department of State a construct similar to the old USIA. This new agency should be tightly coupled to the State Department, just as is USAID. In a tripartite relationship with Department of State and USAID, it could wield the information instrument of national power effectively to support regional engagement,

GCC Theater Security Cooperation Programs as well as achieving national security objectives.<sup>48</sup>

The Center for Strategic and International Studies also recommends a sustained public diplomacy effort by the United States in order to support national security objectives and regional engagement. In a 2001 study, the think tank recommended establishing a bipartisan commission of members from government and private sector experts from the communications profession. The following is a recommended list of ideas and initiatives: Prioritize public diplomacy in the foreign policy process; Strengthen public opinion research; Develop a rapid response capability; Empower ambassadors, embassies, and foreign service officers; Create American – presence posts outside of foreign capitals; Take better advantage of media in the Arab and Muslim world; Bolster Voice of America (VOA) and create new outlets and media; Develop and support outside validators; Cultivate foreign opinion leaders; Sustain foreign exchange programs; Develop message campaigns with the private sector; Engage Muslim Americans in communicating America’s message; Undermine censorship and press constraints. Although not all-inclusive, this list is a starting point for synchronizing and

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<sup>48</sup> Michael J. Zwiebel, *Why We Need to Reestablish the USIA*. Military Review, Ft. Combined Arms Center, Ft. Leavenworth, KS, NOV-DEC 2006. 26-35.



unifying America's communication program to support regional engagement in Central Asia.<sup>49</sup>

Public diplomacy is one of the national instruments of power employed to implement the U.S. National Security Strategy. By winning over the hearts and minds of individuals within a state, public diplomacy can help the U.S. Government move a state toward more democratic forms of government. If the United States can successfully use public diplomacy for this purpose, then it achieves one of the National Security objectives, to "expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure for democracy."<sup>50</sup>

Military. In 1999, U.S. Central Command became responsible for U.S. military engagement in Central Asia. All the regional states except Tajikistan joined NATO's Partnership for Peace (PFP) program by mid-1994. Tajikistan joined in 2002. Central Asian troops have participated in PFP, or "PFP Style" exercises in the United States since 1995, and U.S. troops have participated in exercises in Central Asia since 1997. A June

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<sup>49</sup> Kurt M. Campbell and Michelle A. Flournoy, *To Prevail: an American Strategy for the Campaign against Terrorism*, The CSIS Press, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington D.C. 2001. 141-151.

<sup>50</sup> Michael J. Zwiebel, *Why We Need to Reestablish the USIA*. Military Review, Ft. Combined Arms Center, Ft. Leavenworth, KS, NOV-DEC 2006. 26-35.

2004 NATO summit communiqué pledged enhanced Alliance attention to the countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia.<sup>51</sup>

A comprehensive engagement program using the military instrument of national power supports the U.S. National Security Policy by building host nation capacity. This engagement requires sustained commitment and appropriate funding. Leveraging the NATO PFP with an extensive exchange and exercise program must be continued and used as a venue for additional programs of modernizing and equipping in order to increase interoperability with the militaries of the region. Special operations forces provide a great capability for conducting counterterrorism training (CT) exchanges. CT training also provides an additional aspect of bolstering the ability of the regions border security forces as well as providing an excellent multilateral training venue. Finally, an extensive International Military Education and Training (IMET) account must be established. A broad IMET program with participation by noncommissioned officers, company grade officers and field grade officers will assist the regional governments in professionalizing their military leadership and additionally exposes potential future national leaders to the United States and its professional military. The GCC should also have the ability to select gifted regional military professionals for advanced civil education programs, in line with the Fulbright Program, to U.S. institutions of higher

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<sup>51</sup> Jim Nichol, *Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for US Interests*, CRS Issue Brief for Congress, Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, Washington D.C., DEC 2005. CRS3-CRS-4.

learning. Military engagement is an aspect of regional engagement with great payoff potential for modest investment.

Military reform in the Central Asian states will have an impact on regional capabilities. All the militaries in this part of the world are in transition, but not all are equally far along. The forces these states inherited from the Soviet Union remain incompatible with their security environments. The legacy equipment, infrastructure, human capital, and operational concepts are all dated. While the Central Asian states have for the most part recognized the need to adapt their armed forces to their real security environments, only a few states have yet committed needed resources to the process, which the US can assist by approving realistic and necessary military aid packages. Development of modern, capable and professional militaries from post-Soviet legacy forces will require major commitments of time and resources.<sup>52</sup>

Economic. The United States responded to the support provided by Central Asian nations following 9/11 attacks, by dramatically increasing foreign aid programs across the region. Privately, many Central Asians questioned how long this “appreciation” and support and specifically heightened funding would last. For example, Uzbekistan saw its assistance jump from a FY01 level of \$28,993,000 to \$160,405,000 in FY02, only to fall back to \$43,948,000 a year later in FY03. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan also saw substantial increases, again only to see assistance levels drop to just slightly above FY01 levels. These precipitous drops in funding led many Central Asians to seriously question the US commitment to the region. In conjunction with systematic multi-year programs

developed by USAID, a more balanced and sustainable approach would have been more effective. A statutory revision allowing multiyear foreign aid funding will support a thought out and sustainable regional development program.<sup>53</sup>

Financial. The country team must consider the economy economics as a logical line of operation in building the regional engagement strategy. Development of market economies within the region supports the essential tasks addressed in the U.S. National Security Strategy: ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade; expand the circle of development by opening societies and building infrastructure of democracy.<sup>54</sup> Central Asia has emerged as one of the world's fastest growing regions since the late 1990s and has notable developmental potential. This is significant for a region comprising small landlocked economies with no access to the sea for trade. Among the advantages of the region are its high-priced commodities (oil, gas, cotton, strategic minerals and hydroelectric capability; see Appendix 2), a reasonable infrastructure and human capital as legacies of Soviet rule; and a strategic location between Asia and Europe. Following a prolonged period of slow and negative growth, the region seems to have turned the corner during the last few years and economic

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<sup>52</sup> Olga Olikier and Thomas S. Szayna, *Faultlines of Conflict in Central Asia and the South Caucasus; implications for the U.S. Army*, United States Army, RAND, Santa Monica, CA 2003. 307-310.

<sup>53</sup> William C. Lambert, *US-Central Asian Security Cooperation: Misunderstandings, Miscommunications & Missed Opportunities*, Security Assistance, U.S. and International Historical Perspectives, The Proceedings of the Combat Studies Institute 2006 Military History Symposium, Combat Studies Institute Press, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, 2006. 150-152.

<sup>54</sup> United States Government. National Security Strategy of the United States of America. Washington DC, March 2006.

recovery seems to be underway. Economic growth for the period of 2002-2004 averaged 9.9 percent per year, a historically unprecedented level. Growth predictions for the next three years will range in the range of 9 percent per year.<sup>55</sup>

As part of the regional engagement strategy the United States must continue to work with regional nations to integrate with international banking institutions, such as the World Bank, the World Trade Organization currently Kyrgyzstan is the only member, and the International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank for macroeconomic development. Furthermore, the country teams should pursue venues for microeconomic development and financing to support development of small business and employment of the region's human capital. As stated, the economy is a key logical line of operation for the regional engagement strategy.

Intelligence. Regional threats were addressed in the second chapter of this monograph. The Ferghana Valley is a key region shared by Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan with ethnic tensions, weak control by the respective central governments and a growing Islamic fundamentalist movement with potential ties to Al Qaeda through elements of the IMU and HT (Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Hizb-ut-Tahir respectively).<sup>56</sup> Developing regional intelligence sharing mechanisms and the capacities

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<sup>55</sup> Malcolm Dowling and Ganeshan Wignaraja, *Central Asia's Economy: Mapping Future Prospects to 2015*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, A Silk Road Paper, JUL 2006. 10-11.

<sup>56</sup> Matthew Crosston, *Fostering Fundamentalism: Terrorism, Democracy and American Engagement in Central Asia*. Ashgate Publishing Company, Burlington, VT 2006. 5-6.

of the Central Asian states' intelligence services as part of a regional comprehensive engagement plan supports the US National Strategy for Combating Terrorism. As stated in the U.S. National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, "America is at war with a transnational terrorist movement fueled by a radical ideology of hatred, oppression and murder", and further states, " working with committed partners across the globe, we will continue to use a broad range of tools at home and abroad to take the fight to the terrorist, deny them entry to the united States, hinder movement across international borders, and establish protective measures to further reduce vulnerability to attack".<sup>57</sup> In order for the regional phase 0 engagement plan to be truly comprehensive, the interagency members (Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, and representation from the Director of National intelligence and the National Counter Terrorism Center) of the respective country teams and at the GCC must coordinate extensively to synchronize unity of effort.

Law Enforcement. Expanding the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy is a key component of the U.S. National Security Strategy.<sup>58</sup> Good governance, transparency and the rule of law are the foundations of effective democracies, which in turn provide an environment for economic development and growth. Chapter II addressed the threats of narcotics and smuggling,

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<sup>57</sup> United States Government *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*. Washington DC. September 2006.

<sup>58</sup> United States Government. *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. Washington DC, March 2006.

human trafficking and corruption, which merit attention in a regional phase zero engagement plans. Country team representatives from the Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security in cooperation with international organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) using lessons learned from the Balkans to provide expertise in organizing and training national level law enforcement. Exposure to democratic institutions and methods of law enforcement by western governments through out-of-country training and exchanges would be of great benefit. The goal and end-state of working law enforcement as a logical line of operation is that it has the potential have a synergistic affect across this phase zero frameworks of the instruments of national power.

## **CHAPTER V – Regional Engagement – The Role of Multilateral Organizations**

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the history of United States engagement with the five Central Asian states can be characterized as bilateral with each of the Central Asian states, largely ignoring the main issues that are common and cut across political boundaries. The U.S. Government and other analyst of Central Asia were, and still are, well aware of the likelihood that success in the war on terror in the region will be contingent on linking strategies to counter extremist and militant group to political reform and improving social conditions. Central Asian governments and state institutions remain weak. Economic collapse, isolation from global markets, high birthrates and high unemployment, the absence of social safety nets, inadequate education and increasing illiteracy, heroin trafficking and intravenous drug use, public health crisis, the erosion of traditional social institutions and the infiltration of radical ideologies all challenge each of

the states to a greater or lesser degree. Broader regional development issues, such as water resource management, energy development, and trade can also not be tackled without the concerted effort of all the regional states. Although the war on terror brought more cooperation between individual Central Asian states and the United States, it has not appreciably increased cooperation among the states themselves.<sup>59</sup>

All of these broad regional issues are the primary factors that drive the requirement for regional engagement program executed on a multilateral basis using all the instruments of national power by the United States. At present, there are three types of institutions within Central Asia that provide potential venues for a United States role with the major regional powers of Russia and China for multilateral engagement with the Central Asian states that is truly regional. The first type includes Russian-led institutions; the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Eurasian Economic Community (EvrAzES), on the economic side, and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), on the defense/military side. None of these organizations officially recognizes Russia's "leading role". However, Russia's geopolitical locations as a link between Central Asia and other geographical areas, its political clout, and the size of its economy place Russia in the "driver's seat" of these organizations. The second institutional type is represented by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which started as a Chinese initiative, but is steered jointly by Beijing and Moscow. Both strive to court Central Asian partners and harness their resources to the objectives China and Russian share in

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<sup>59</sup> Fiona Hill, *Central Asia and the Caucasus: The Impact of the War on Terror*. The Brookings



the region. Finally, NATO led by the United States but very sensitive to European members' priorities, emerges as a third type of organization. It does not include any of the Central Asian countries as members, but cooperates with them through the Partnership of Peace and other outreach programs.<sup>60</sup>

Geography and geopolitical conditions rule out the possibility of the United States becoming a member of EvrAzES or CSTO. More important is the recognition of Russian interests in the area, finding areas of common interest and cooperation within the Central Asian region. Closer cooperation with Russia could lead to the potential use these organizations as a mechanism for multi-lateral engagement.

The NATO, Partnership for Peace Program (PFP) was mentioned in the prior chapter as one of the engagement mechanisms for the military instrument of national power. This Program remains a viable outreach mechanism for U.S. multilateral regional engagement at a regional level. PFP program provides a mechanism for capacity building within the region's militaries and an ancillary benefit of promoting democratic growth in the region through professionalizing the region's military establishments. NATO published communiqué following the June 2004 summit in Istanbul referring to Central Asia and the Caucasus as "strategically important regions". Based on NATO's commitment Afghanistan as the headquarters for the International Security and

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Institute, Washington DC. 2004. 43.

<sup>60</sup> Mikhail Troitsky, *Institutionalizing U.S. – Russian Cooperation in Central Eurasia*, Occasional Paper #293, Kennan Institute, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington D.C., 2006. 8.

Stabilization Force (ISAF), continued engagement in Central Asia is necessary, due to shared security concerns.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was founded in 2001 and includes China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Turkmenistan is the only Central Asian nation that is not a member nor been granted observer status. Four additional Asian nations, Iran, Pakistan, India, and Mongolia, are participating under observer status. If Pakistan and India should join the SCO, the organization would represent nearly half the world's population. The potential influence the SCO could wield on the international stage would greatly increase and potentially comparable to other regional international organizations such as NATO or the European Union (EU).<sup>61</sup>

The SCO is the most important platform upon which China plays a role in Central Asia. Over the past five years, SCO members have managed to establish mechanisms for multilateral mutual trust, as well as cooperation in regional security, and they are expanding their economic cooperation at present. China expects to promote its cooperation with the U.S. on the basis of the SCO. Because of important U.S. interests, influence in Central Asia and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, the future development of the SCO must take the U.S. into account, as much as the U.S. must take the SCO into account as it continues to evolve and engage on the world stage. The United States should actively seek observer status in the SCO due to its ongoing and long-term

interests in the Central Asia. Observer status would provide the U.S. a venue for multilateral engagement at the regional level and in an organization, which includes both China and Russia. The SCO may hold the potential for dealing with issues that are outside the Central Asian region, but have potential regional ramifications, Pakistan and India tensions over Kashmir, and the U.S. relationship with a possible nuclear-armed Iran as well as its influence in Iraq. The United States cannot afford to not deal with this evolving organization and wish to retain its current level influence in Central Asia.

### **CONCLUSION – The New Great Game – A Positive Engagement**

America entered the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as a confident nation. The preceding half century witnessed a peaceful conclusion of the Cold War with the Soviet Union that ended with its collapse in the early 1990s. The 1990s and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century experienced a new framing of the global order from bi-polar to multi-polar or uni-polar from the perspective of some, with the United States as the sole remaining global power. Another characteristic of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has been globalization, which has been fueled by the technology of the information age. America entered this new reality confident in its power and position. This position was shaken by the attacks of September 11, 2001. A new reality was forced on America along with a global war, declared by the current administration, on terrorism and those that support and carry those acts out.

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<sup>61</sup> Michael Troitsky, *Institutionalizing U.S. – Russian Cooperation in Central Eurasia*, Occasional Paper #293, Kennan Institute, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington D.C., 2006. 9-10.

This new reality calls for fundamental changes in the way the United States deals with the rest of the world and in particular the strategic region of Central Asia. This region holds many interests for the United States as well as shared common interest with Russia and China. The United States must move from evolve its foreign policy from essentially a bi-lateral engagement system to a multilateral approach, especially in the Central Asian region. Too many issues cross geopolitical boundaries and can potentially affect nations and regions outside of Central Asia: promotion of democracy, energy resources, and radical Islamic fundamentalism that potential fuels terrorist ideology. More importantly, engagement early or “upstream” before crisis or conflict erupts must be the method of the 21str Century.

This monograph proposed a phase 0 (Zero) engagement plan, based on the instruments of national power; diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement (D-I-M-E-F-I-L) from the National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism as a framework. Also recommended were statutory changes that would align Department of State and Department of Defense regions of responsibility and Bureaus. As well as the designation of regional ambassadors to help affect the coordination and unity of effort required by the issues that transcend geopolitical and regional boundaries. In addition, the formation of country teams, at the Geographical Combatant Commander’s headquarters and the individual country embassies that are representative of the U.S. government’s interagency process and support the intent of National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-44. The analysis of this paper proposing necessary statutory changes is superficial and requires a more detailed and in-depth study.

Finally, the United States must engage not only regionally, but also in a multilateral manner, when it comes to regional and extra-regional issues. Existing multinational organizations, such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization (with Russian lead, CSTO), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO, also engages member states of the European Union) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (with Chinese lead, SCO) are potential venues to facilitate this engagement.

The bottom-line is really, a goal to look at and propose new ways for doing the business of statecraft for a new era of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. An era characterized by globalization, trans-national actors (both good and bad), non-state actors, the threat of WMD, and radical ideologies that practice terrorism on a global scale. This environment demands a new thought process and way of engaging with the other nations of our shrinking world.

## APPENDIX 1- Central Asia

Figure 1. Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan



Source: Map Resources. Adapted by CRS. (08/02 M. Chin)

Nichol, Jim, *Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for US Interests*, CRS Issue Brief for Congress, Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, Washington D.C., DEC 2005

## APPENDIX 2 - BASIC INFORMATION BY COUNTRY<sup>62</sup>

### **Kazakhstan.**

Official Name            Republic of Kazakhstan

Derivation            Kazakh is a Turkic word meaning “someone independent and free.”

Russian People, eventually known as Cossacks, later used the name

Capital City            Astana (pop. 288,000)

Land Area            2,717,300 sq km (1,049,150 sq. miles) – about four times the size of Texas  
– making it the 9<sup>th</sup> largest nation in the world.

Borders            Russian (6,846 km), Uzbekistan (2,203 km), China (1,533 km),  
Kyrgyzstan (1,051 km), Turkmenistan (379 km)

Natural Resources    Petroleum, natural gas, coal, iron ore

Population            15.2 million (2005 estimate)

Pop. Growth Rate    0.26%

Ethnic Groups Kazakh 53%, Russian 30%, Ukrainian 4%, Uzbek 3%, German 2.4%,  
Uighur 1.4%, other 7%

Religion            Muslim 47%, Russian Orthodox 44%, Protestant 2%, other 7%

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<sup>62</sup> Olcott, Martha Brill, Central Asia's Second Chance, The Carnegie Endowment for Peace, The

Executive Branch      Chief of State: President – 7 year terms

Legislative Branch      Bicameral Parliament

Senate (39 seats, 6 – year terms)

Majilis (77 seats)

Judicial Branch              Supreme Court (44 members); Constitutional Council (7 members)

National Currency      Tenge (KZT)

GDP                      \$118.4 billion

GDP per Capita              \$7,800

GDP Composition      Agriculture: 7.4%

Industry: 37.8%

Services: 54.8%

Exports              In 2003, exports totaled \$13.2 billion. The main exports were oil, natural gas, coal, wood products, metal, chemicals, grain, wool, and meat. Top consumers were Russia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, the Netherlands, and China.



Imports            Kazakhstan's imports in 2001 were \$9.1 billion. The main imports were coal and electricity. The largest imports were from Russia, Germany, and China.

Miscellaneous Kazakhstan is believed to possess about 1% of the world's total natural gas and petroleum reserves. In post-Soviet era, Kazakhstan has received about 80% of foreign investment in Central Asia.

## **Kyrgyzstan.**

Official Name           Kyrgyz Republic (Kyrgyz Respublikasy)

Derivation       In the old Turkic language, kyrg means “40” and yz means “tribes”, so the word itself means “40 tribes.” The Kyrgyz originated in Mongolia.

Capital City           Bishkek (pop. 824,000)

Land Area           191, 300 sq km (76,640 sq. miles) – slightly smaller than South Dakota

Borders           Uzbekistan (1,099 km), Kazakhstan (1,051 km), Tajikistan (870 km), China (858 km)

Natural Resources    Abundant hydropower; significant deposits of gold and rare earth metals; locally exportable coal, oil and natural gas.

Population           5.2 million (2005 estimate)

Pop. Growth Rate    1.25 %

Ethnic Groups Kyrgyz 67%, Uzbek 14 %, Russian 11%, Dungan (ethnic Chinese Muslim) 1%, Tartar

1%, Uighur 1%, other 6%

Religion            Sunni Muslim 75%, Russian Orthodox 20%, other 5%

Executive Branch	Chief of State: President – 5 year terms
Legislative Branch	Bicameral Supreme Council, or Zhogorku Kenesh  Assembly of People’s Representative (70 seats; 5-year terms)  Legislative Assembly (35 seats; 5-year terms)
Judicial Branch	Supreme Court (judges appointed for 10-year terms); Constitutional Court; Higher Court Arbitration
National Currency	Som (KGS)
GDP	\$8.495 billion
GDP per Capita	\$1,700
GDP Composition	Agriculture: 28.5%  Industry: 22.8%  Services: 38.7%
Exports	2003 estimated value: \$581 million. The main exports were cotton, wool, meat, and electricity. Principle customers are Kazakhstan, Russia, China, the United States, Uzbekistan and Germany.
Imports	2003 estimated value”: \$717 million. The main imports were fossil fuels, machinery, chemicals, textiles, and food products. The imports are predominately from Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Germany, and China.

Miscellaneous

Kyrgyzstan has the world's largest natural growth walnut forest.

## **Tajikistan**

Official Name            Republic of Tajikistan (Jumhuri Tajikistan)

Derivation            In Persian, taj means “crown” and ik means “head,” so Tajik means, “a person wearing a crown on his head.” Tajiks were originally Persians.

Capital City            Dushanbe (590,000)

Land Area            143,100 sq km (55,251 sq. miles) – slightly smaller than

Wisconsin

Borders            Afghanistan (1,206 km), Uzbekistan (1,161), Kyrgyzstan (870), China (414 km)

Natural Resources    Hydropower, some petroleum, uranium, mercury, brown coal, lead, zinc, antimony, Tungsten, silver, gold

Population            7.2 million (2005 estimate)

Pop. Growth Rate    2 %

Ethnic Groups           Tajik 65%, Uzbek 25%, Russian 4

Religion            Sunni Muslim 85%, Shiite Muslim 5%, other 20%

Executive Branch    Chief of State: President – 7 year terms

Legislative Branch   Bicameral Supreme Assembly of Majlisi Oli

Majlisi Namoyandagon with 63 seats; 5-year terms.

Majlisi Milliy with 33 seats, indirectly elected, 5-year terms.

Judicial Branch                      Supreme Court (judges appointed by the president)

National Currency      Somoni (TJS)

GDP                      \$7.95 billion

GDP per Capita                      \$1,100

GDP Composition      Agriculture: 23.7%

Industry: 24.3%

Services: 52%

Exports                      In 2003, exports were worth \$750 million. Main exports were aluminum (accounting for over half of export value), electricity, cotton, fruits, vegetable oil, and textiles. Most went to the Netherlands, Turkey, Latvia, Switzerland, Uzbekistan, Russia, and Iran.

Imports                      In 2003, imports were worth \$890 million. The main imports were electricity, fossil fuels, alumina (for processing), grain, and flour. Most came from Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Ukraine and Romania.

Miscellaneous About 15-20% of the working population is estimated to be in Russia. In 2003, the average wage of a public-sector employee was \$10/month, well below the poverty line.

## **Turkmenistan**

Official Name            Republic of Turkmenistan

Derivation        In the Turkic language, turk refers to the ancient Turks of Asia. The word men means “I” or “me”. Turkmen then means “I am a Turk.” The Turkmen, originally known as the Oghuz, came from what we now call Mongolia.

Capital City            Ashgabat (727,000)

Land Area            488,100 sq km (188,455 sq. miles) – slightly larger than California

Borders            Uzbekistan (1,621 km), Iran (992km), Afghanistan (744 km), Kazakhstan (379 km)

Natural Resources    Petroleum, natural gas, coal, sulfur, salt

Population            4.95 million (2003 estimate)

Pop. Growth Rate    1.81%

Ethnic Groups        Turkmen 85%, Uzbek 5%, Russian 4%

Religion            Sunni Muslim 89%, Eastern Orthodox 9%, unknown 2%

Executive Branch    Chief of State: President – term extended indefinitely in 1999

Legislative Branch    There are two separate parliamentary bodies:



The People's Council or Hulk Maslahaty, with up to 2,500 delegates

The Majilis (50 seats; 5-year term)

Judicial Branch Supreme Court (judges appointed by the president)

National Currency Manat (TMM)

GDP \$27.6 billion

GDP per Capita \$5,700

GDP Composition Agriculture: 28.5%

Industry: 42.7%

Services: 28.8%

Exports In 2003 exports totaled \$3.6 billion. Main exports were gas, crude oil, petrochemicals, cotton fiber, and textiles. Top buyers are Ukraine, Italy, Iran, Azerbaijan, and Turkey.

Imports Estimated value 2003: \$2.5 billion. Main imports were machinery and transport equipment, chemicals and food. Top suppliers are Germany, Ukraine, UAE, Russia and Turkey.

Miscellaneous The Kara-Kum desert occupies over 80% of the nation's territory. Foreign firms have been active in the construction industry, with French, Turkish, and Ukrainian

firms helping build government buildings and infrastructure projects. French and German firms have been involved in upgrading the national telecommunications system.

## **Uzbekistan**

Official Name            Republic of Uzbekistan (Ozbekiston Respublikasi)

Derivation            Uzbek is considered to come from two Turkish words: uz, which means “genuine,” and bek, which means “genuine man.” The Uzbeks are a mixture of nomadic Turkic tribes and ancient Iranian peoples.

Capital City            Tashkent (2.15 million)

Land Area            477,400 sq km (172,741 sq. miles) - slightly larger than California

Borders            Kazakhstan (2,203 km), Turkmenistan (1,621 km), Tajikistan (1,161 km), Kyrgyzstan (1,099 km), Afghanistan (137 km)

Natural Resources    Natural gas, petroleum, coal, gold, uranium, silver, copper, lead and zinc, tungsten, molybdenum

Population            26.9 million (2003 estimate)

Pop. Growth Rate    1.67%

Ethnic Groups Uzbek 80%, Russian 5.5%, Tajik 5%, Kazakh 3%, Karakalpak 2.5%, Tartar 1.5%, other 2.5% (1996 estimate)

Religion            Muslim 88% (mostly Sunni), Eastern Orthodox 9%, other 3%

Executive Branch    Chief of State: President – seven year terms, next election in December 2007

Legislative Branch      Unicameral Supreme Assembly or Oliy Majlis: 250 seats; elected by popular vote to 5year terms

Judicial Branch                      Supreme Court

National Currency      Som (UZS)

GDP                      \$47.59 billion

GDP per Capita                      \$1,800

GDP Composition      Agriculture: 28%

Industry: 26.3%

Services: 35.7%

Exports              In 2003 exports totaled \$2.8 billion. Main exports are cotton, gold, natural gas, and fertilizers. Main customers are Russia, Ukraine, Italy, South Korea, and Tajikistan.

Imports              In 2003, imports totaled \$2.3 billion. The main imports were machinery, chemicals and plastics, foods and metals. Main source countries are Russia, South Korea, Germany, the United States, Turkey, and Kazakhstan.

Miscellaneous Along with Lichtenstein, one of tow doubly landlocked countries in the world, meaning they are completely surrounded by other land-locked countries.

Minimum wage is \$6.40

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